

June 20, 2005  
5979 TX Hwy 19 N  
Sulphur Springs, TX 75482

Docket No. 05-015-1  
Regulatory Analysis & Development, PPD,  
APHIS, Station 3C71,  
4700 River Road, Unit 118,  
Riverdale, MD 20737-1238

NATIONAL ID OF ALL LIVESTOCK IS A HORRIBLE IDEA!!! Any time the federal government becomes involved in what should be the business of individuals, it becomes a disaster. We have for years had hot iron brands registered with states and counties, which have worked very well for necessary animal identification. The idea of a national data base is another example of federal usurpation of states rights. The tenth amendment says the federal government is limited to the powers listed in the constitution and all others belong to the states and citizens. This is a massive, unacceptable power grab.

Since when has the USDA become a lawmaking body? Congress passed a law mandating country of origin labelling for all meat and animals entering the United States from any foreign country and without being a burden to the American farmer and rancher. You have morphed a law which should have been good for not only livestock producers but consumers as well and changed it to an excuse to intrude into the lives and private business of American livestock producers.

Other than the fact that it is intrusive and unnecessary, the cost will be prohibitive. Also, the idea of all our livestock information being in a federal database gives too much opportunity for unauthorized information to fall into the wrong hands, as has happened in the case of the compromising of information on vast numbers of credit card users. There is a very serious issue of privacy here.

As consumers we have a right to know where our food comes from and be free to buy what we want to eat. An argument was made that it would be too expensive to have country of origin labelling, but if it is not cost prohibitive to be able to identify a plum, it should not be a lot more difficult to identify a cow. If all meat and animals from every foreign country was identified as to origin, the rest would certainly be from the United States. That should not be too hard to understand. We have not had any BSE in this country except what was imported from Canada, so it would seem a lot more logical to identify foreign than domestic beef.

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Also, from all I have read, it would seem if I wanted to raise a beef for my own use, I would have to account for it, since in order to have all animals identified, it would be necessary to account for each of them, death loss and all. This would be an accountability nightmare!! I number tag all of my stock and neither have nor want a computer. I want to be able to go out, look at the tags and get the information I need without having to corral them and run them through a scanner. This would be a major unnecessary expense. While I have no objection to anyone else using computer chips, I see no reason I should be compelled to go to that unnecessary expense.

This entire idea is a bureaucratic nightmare and a major intrusion into something that is none of the business of the USDA. It seems the USDA is working for Canada and everyone else except the American farmer and rancher.



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